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No. 163

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## WORLDWIDE REPORT

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AUSTRALIA

TEAM REPORTS HIGH RISK OF EAR DISEASE IN ABORIGINES

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 3 Sep 79 p 9

[Article by Shaun McIlraith, medical correspondent]

[Text]

The prevalence of middle-ear disease among Aborigines in rural Australia is among the highest in the world, according to a study by a health team which covered the country.

The team, with the National Trachoma and Eye Health Program, also reports that the middle-ear disease rate is 10 times worse among Aborigines than whites — and seems to be getting worse.

The trachoma program team was concerned primarily with infectious eye disease among rural Aborigines, but also investigated general health.

It has presented its findings on middle-ear disease in 439 communities around Australia in the Medical Journal of Australia.

The report is by Dr David J. Moran, Mr Jack Waterford, Professor Fred Hollows, an associate professor of ophthalmology at the University of NSW, and Dr David L. Jones.

They found that 11 per cent of 60,273 Aborigines examined had inflammation of the middle ear and 29.1 per cent had scarring in one or both ears, probably indicating previous attacks.

In contrast, only 1.1 per cent of non-Aborigines examined had middle-ear inflammation; 13.5 per cent had scarring in one or both ears.

The team says the high prevalence of middle-ear disease in Aboriginal children persists through the teenage years and into adulthood.

A decrease in the scarring rate in older Aborigines suggests that younger Aborigines may suffer more middle-ear disease today than their counterparts did 40 or 50 years ago.

The team associates middle-ear disease in Aborigines with chronic respiratory infections and calls for a national campaign to reduce these infections.

## SMALLPOX ERADICATION REPORTED TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Addis Ababa THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD in English 2 Oct 79 p 4

[Text] ADDIS ABABA (EH) — The Smallpox Eradication Programme which began in 1971 in Ethiopia has been completed crowned with remarkable success, a release issued by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health disclosed.

According to the release, the last outbreak in the highlands, was in Gondar in February 1976. Previously inaccessible areas of Debre Tabor were searched and 13 infected villages with 169 cases were detected in the Blue Nile River gorge adjacent to endemic areas in Bahar Dar, Gojam.

In May 1976, as search activities were extended, a new focus, 40 kilometres in diameter and 120 kilometres north of the Blue Nile gorge was discovered with 140 cases in 24 affected villages in adjacent areas of Debre Tabor, Gayint, and Liba *awrajas*, it was related.

In the middle of June '76, a further six affected villages were found in Iste *woreda*, where difficulties remained in obtaining public co-operation. One of them Limon Giorgis was the last affected village in the highlands, the release explained.

The last case in the highlands was Alelegu Getachew, a one year old boy, vaccinated on 27 June, of that year who developed a mild rash on 5 July and survived.

In the lowlands, the last smallpox focus of Ethiopia was found in the lowlands of the Ogaden Desert, while smallpox in the desert had been passed backwards and forwards between villagers settled along the Wabe Shebele River.

During the same period, numerous outbreaks had occurred in Gode, Kelafo, Warder *awrajas* of Hararghe region and in El Kere *awraja* of Bale region.

Afker *woreda* in El Kere *awraja* had been known to have cases but had been thought to have been free of smallpox by the end of that year the release stated.

It added that the last outbreak in the lowlands was noted in 1976 in the village of Dimo in Afker *woreda*.

### Active Surveillance

The release stated that surveillance in Ethiopia began in January 1977 with a rural house-to-house search in the rural areas carried out from November to April 1979, while a country-wide house-to-house search was carried out in July/August in nearly 700 towns in the same year.

It went on to say that the reward of 1,000 Birr offered by WHO for reporting smallpox was endorsed by the Government and widely publicized.



ed by the programme staff. It added that during the 37 months since the last case was recorded in Ethiopia, practically all areas and all population groups were contacted, for the most part two or more times, but no smallpox case was found, the release disclosed.

2998 specimens collected by search workers from severe patients with rash in 1977-1979 were tested by WHO reference laboratories and all found negative for smallpox virus; it was stated.

The release pointed out that the programme began with only 29 sanitarians and 26 expatriate volunteers eight years ago, but has over a thousand Ethiopian and foreign experts by 1979.

It added that the Government undertook complete responsibility for the success of the programme and said that the increased commitment by the Revolutionary Government made it possible to approach peasants' associations on a systematic basis across the country, the release concluded.

Meanwhile, an International Commission of Health representatives from Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Soviet Union arrived here Sunday mor-

ning to investigate if there had been any case of smallpox in Ethiopia during the last two years.

The group emphasised there could not be any, although it believes that there are some areas requiring more investigations. During the present visit, the commission plans to carry out investigations throughout the country, it was learnt.

If the outcome of the investigation is satisfactory, members of the commission said that it would mark a historic event for the country. This will mean that Ethiopia is completely free of Smallpox.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is involved in the Smallpox eradication programme in Ethiopia.

Members of the commission were welcomed at the airport by Dr. Haile-Mariam Kahsay, WHO co-ordinator in Ethiopia, and Ato Yemane Tekeste, head of the Smallpox eradication programme.

Members of the commission are Prof J. Kostrzewski, Poland, Prof. K.R. Dunbell of the United Kingdom, Dr. D.A. Henderson, USA, Dr. D. Robinson, UK, Dr. A. Stroganov, USSR.

## HUNGARY

### BRIEFS

ANTIPOLIO IMMUNIZATION--On 17 September, the immunization of infants born between 16 September 1976 and 30 June 1979 against contagious poliomyelitis has begun throughout the country. A total of over 500,000 of them will be immunized, some 70,000 in Budapest. The infants will be given sabin serum in tea three times a year, to be protected against all three virus types capable of causing the disease. The immunization is mandatory. The second and third immunizations will take place between 29 October and 3 November and between 10 and 15 December respectively. [Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 18 Sep 79 p 9 AU]

CSO: 5400

## BRIEFS

**CHOLERA DEATHS IN VARANASI**--Varanasi, Sept. 19--Twenty-nine people have reportedly died here of cholera since September 13, reports PTI. Mr Desh Raj Singh, administrator of the municipal corporation, told reporters that seven cholera deaths had been confirmed by the infectious hospital. He said the supply of contaminated water caused the outbreak of the disease. Mr Singh said steps were being taken to plug leakages in sewers and water pipelines. He said the disease would be controlled soon. Meanwhile, three slaughter houses and 70 meat shops have been closed and preventive measures, including supply of anti-cholera vaccine, taken. The residents of the worst-affected Jaitpura area told reporters that 22-people had died and about 100 cases were being treated in different camps and the Jamiyalliya Hospital. A report from Basti said the disease had broken out in Maghar township in the district. One person has died and 71 cases have been reported. Medical aid has been sent to the township from the district headquarters. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 20 Sep 79 p 1]

**GASTROENTERITIS TOLL**--Gastroenteritis has claimed 36 lives in the past two months from Khandwa district in Madhya Pradesh, according to an official report from Khandwa on Saturday.--PTI. [Text] [Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 30 Sep 79 p 7]

**ENCEPHALITIS DEATHS**--In West Bengal, at least 156 persons have so far died on encephalitis. A United News of India report says the disease is now sweeping through the districts of Burdwan, Hooghly and West Dinajpur. [Text] [Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 20 Oct 79 BK]

MALARIA TOLL--Fourteen people have died of malaria in North Tripura district during the past two months. Reports of more deaths are coming in from other parts of the State. The Government has set up 207 malaria detection centres and 110 malaria investigation teams from the Centre are working in the State.--UNI. [Text] [Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 14 Oct 79 p 7]

VIRAL INFECTION--Fifty-one people, mostly children up to 12 years, have been affected--one fatally--by an undetected viral infection in Anantagiri village in Andhra Pradesh over the past two months. There is no evidence that the viral is malaria.--UNI. [Text] [Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 14 Oct 79 p 7]

CSO: 5400

IRAN

HEALTH MINISTRY ISSUES WARNING ON CHOLERA

Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Sep 79 LD

[Text] The Ministry of Health and Welfare today once again pointed out that observing health precautions, especially the careful and complete sterilization of raw vegetables and fruits before consumption, is of great importance in preventing contraction of El Tor cholera. It announced the latest figures on the incidence of this disease and deaths resulting from it.

According to this report, the total positive cases of the disease up to 12 September numbered 611 of which 23 people, unfortunately, have died because they were too late in contacting health centers. Moreover, Lorestan and Esfahan provinces are among the regions which have recently been contaminated with El Tor cholera.

CSO: 5400

EL TOR CHOLERA 'NOT COMPLETELY UNDER CONTROL'

Tehran BAMDAD in Persian 29 Sep 79 p 16

[Text] Dr Azmudeh, director of public health operations of the Central [Tehran] Province said in an interview that the people of Arak could call No. 115 if they became really sick and had an emergency and get effective help from this office. Of course, it should be explained that after they had been examined by technicians and found not to be emergency cases, they would at least be kept from carrying the disease.

While speaking in Arak he added that his office now has two ambulances and twelve medical technicians who are ready to help the people of Arak 24 hours a day.

Regarding the outbreak of El Tor cholera in the Central Province, Dr Azmudeh said: So far, no cases of this disease have been observed in the city of Arak, but some cases have been found in the township of Khomeyn which were cured immediately by measures taken by the public health office of that province. Cases of El Tor cholera have also been found in Qom which were controlled by preventive sanitary measures of the city with the help of the Construction Crusade Corps which are trying on a wide scale to control this disease and find its healthy carriers.

However, this disease has not been completely controlled yet and measures are continuing. A case has also been reported in the township of Tafresh as well as several healthy carriers. He asked the people to wash all fruit and vegetables, before eating, with a perchlorine disinfectant solution which his office has made available to the public free of charge, and he urged them to observe this precaution.

CSO: 5400

IRAN

BRIEFS

EL TOR CHOLERA OUTBREAK--A Ministry of Health and Welfare spokesman has announced that so far, unfortunately, 33 people have died as a result of El Tor cholera in the country. [Text] [Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Oct 79 LD]

CSO: 5400

ISRAEL

BRIEFS

CHOLERA IN JERICHO--Today the Health Ministry's laboratories diagnosed the first case of cholera caught by a 30-year-old Jericho woman. The woman was hospitalized and all measures were taken to prevent the disease from spreading. The public is requested to keep hygienic rules meticulously. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Sep 79 TA]

CSO: 5400



PAKISTAN

BRIEFS

NEW CASES OF CHOLERA--Two new cases of cholera were recorded yesterday in Jordan, bringing to 75 the number of persons stricken by the disease since its outbreak in the country last month. The health ministry said 16 persons are still being treated and the others have recovered. [Text]  
[Peshawar KHYBER MAIL in English 3 Oct 79 p 2]

CSO: 5400

**MOST CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM INTESTINAL PARASITISM**

Manila PHILIPPINES DAILY EXPRESS in English 27 Sep 79 p 2

[Text] Most filipino children, from seven to 12 years old, are suffering from anemia and intestinal parasitism.

This was revealed by a study conducted by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the National Science Development Board.

The common species of intestinal parasites which infest children are ascaris, Trichuris, and hookworm. These parasites prevent the body from fully utilizing food.

As a result, children lose weight, become pale and weak, or totally malnourished. Iron deficiency anemia accompanies parasitism especially in hookworm infestation where the parasite sucks blood from the intestines.

The common causes of parasitological infestation and anemia are eating unsanitary and or uncooked foods and poor practices in food handling and waste disposal.

An indication of this is the finding that the type and severity of parasites among members of a family follow those of the one who cooks their food.

The FNRI suggests sanitary handling and preparation of foods especially for infants and children. Improvement in personal and environmental hygiene will help reduce the problem, the FNRI said.

Foods rich in iron should also be included in the daily meals. These include liver, green leafy vegetables, egg yolk, dried beans, lean meat, heart, kidney, oysters, and clams.

CSO: 5400

## PHILIPPINES

### BRIEFS

RESPIRATORY DEATHS REACH 16--Cebu City--Sixteen persons died and 169 others were hospitalized during a seven-day period ending Saturday as a result of the upsurge of respiratory ailments in Cebu City, the city health department said. Fourteen succumbed to pneumonia while two others died of bronchitis and complications from influenza. Most of the victims are children. (PNA) [Text] [Manila PHILIPPINES DAILY EXPRESS 2 Oct 79 p 2]

CSO: 5400

## SPAIN

### BRIEFS

**POLIO CASES DOUBLED**--According to a report in the weekly epidemiologic bulletin of the Health Ministry, cases of polio in Spain doubled in 1978 due to a lack of vaccinations. In 50 percent of cases no vaccination had been taken; in the rest the course of vaccinations was not completed. The highest number of cases is reported in Andalusia. The ministry insists on the importance of strictly completing the vaccination program, since the polio virus can attack whenever there has been insufficient vaccination. [Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1300 GMT 10 Sep 79 LD]

**COMMUNIQUE ON CHOLERA IN MALAGA**--According to a communique issued in Malaga by the National Confederation of Labor on 15 September, there were 47 people sick in the city hospital with cholera, which is more than the number of cases in 1971 [as heard]. This union, in its note criticizes the health authorities for their silence on this matter. Meanwhile, the director of the Civilian Hospital has acknowledged that the number of cases is more than during the last epidemic, while the provincial health delegation reported that at 1100 yesterday, Monday, the number of cholera victims was 11 and that none of them are serious. [Text] [Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 18 Sep 79 LD]

CSO: 5400

SOUTH KOREA

HEALTH MINISTRY ISSUES WARNING ON HEMORRHAGIC FEVER

Seoul Domestic Service in Korean 1000 GMT 27 Sep 79 SK

[Text] The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs issued a warning today against the prevailing hemorrhagic epidemic fever and instructed the concerned officials of all the cities and provinces to do their best to treat and prevent it by taking measures such as designating hospitals and clinics for special treatment. The instruction of the ministry is based on the fact that hemorrhagic epidemic fever has been common mainly during the months of October and November in the past few years.

The ministry has also instructed officials to let people catch fieldmice and clean the areas surrounding their houses. According to statistics 158 people fell victim to hemorrhagic epidemic fever in 1976 and 16 of them died. In 1977, 15 out of 176 victims died, and 10 out of 100 died last year. Six persons are suffering from this epidemic fever and one person has died so far this year.

CSO; 5400

## INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

### BRIEFS

**FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE**--The Paraguayan-Argentine Technical Commission for the control of foot and mouth disease ended its meeting in Corrientes, Argentina and approved important decisions regarding mutual cooperation for the control of this disease. [Asuncion PATRIA in Spanish 2 Oct 79 p 6 PY]

CSO: 5400

COLOMBIA

BRIEFS

FOOT-AND-MOUTH OUTBREAK--Pasto--A worrisome outbreak of foot and mouth disease has been detected by Narino health authorities in the southern area of the department. As a result, they have decided to issue a decree placing the area under quarantine. [Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Sep 79 PA]

CSO: 5400

BRIEFS

RABIES INOCULATION CAMPAIGN--All residents of Fort Portal Municipality and neighbouring areas who own dogs are requested to take their dogs for vaccination against rabies at the Fort Portal Veterinary Office. The vaccination campaign started yesterday and will continue until August next year. Vaccination takes place in the mornings only.  
[Text] [Kampala UGANDA TIMES in English 25 Sep 79 p 3]

CS0: 5400



## ZAMBIA

### BRIEFS

DISEASE RESEARCH GIFT--The British-based Wellcome group of companies of which Cooper (Zambia) Limited is member has donated K30,000 towards research on trypanosomiasis, the tick disease which makes some areas of Zambia uninhabitable to cattle. A spokesman for Cooper said yesterday this was the first donation to Zambia by the Wellcome group whose shares are owned by a British charity organisation which donates profits made by the group towards medical research of man and animals. [Text] [Lusaka TIMES OF ZAMBIA in English 16 Oct 79 p 5]

CSO: 5400

## AUSTRALIA

### RECORD LOCUST PLAGUE FORECAST FOR AUSTRALIAN WHEATBELT

#### Dangers to Harvest

Canberra THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN in English 8-9 Sep 79 p 3

[Article by Rural Writer Alan Goodall]

[Text] A locust plague forecast to be worse than the Biblical one that led to the Exodus from Egypt threatens Australia's granary, the central-west of NSW.

Baby hoppers are testing their fledgling wings as they hatch from vast eggbeds, the biggest in 25 years, scattered from southern Queensland to northern Victoria.

Farmers hoping to take advantage of record overseas wheat prices fear that even if they beat the hoppers the grain will not fit into overflowing silos.

The danger of mice plagues attacking emergency stockpiled grain is potentially as disastrous as the locusts.

Never before has Australia entered such a dangerous spring--a possible 14 million tonne wheat harvest threatened by locusts, mice and industrial disputes.

Even if the November-January harvest escapes nature's afflictions, the bank-up of grain from last year's bumper sile intake and a slow export performance is sure to leave a record 20 million tonnes in the wheat pipeline.

The executive director of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation, Mr Ian Wearing, forecast on Friday that if the present slow rate of exports continued, it would be mid-1980 before last season's wheat was cleared.

The coming intake loaded on top of the carry-over would not be cleared before late 1981.

A West Australian union demarcation dispute, a Victorian railway scramble and a NSW

clerks' overtime ban are only half the worry for 50,000 wheat farmers.

More urgent is the eastern States' locust egg hatchings now quickening in the post-rain warmth of spring.

More than 150 grazing and farming properties around Warialda, north-western NSW, had reported hatchings on Friday.

Properties from southern Queensland to the Riverina and west to Hillston were also reporting hatchings.

The NSW Opposition spokesman on agriculture, Mr Wal Murray, said 18,000 properties were exposed to the threat.

He said: "The way things look, this will be the worst devastation in Australia's history."

The Australian Plague Locust Commission, representing Federal and State Governments, forecast on Friday "a very large outbreak" extending through four States.

But the commission director, Dr Phil Symmons, denied that spray planes would not have enough aviation fuel to get off the ground this summer.

Labor's Federal spokesman on primary industry, Senator Peter Walsh, had claimed in Parkes, NSW, that avgas would be in short supply for aerial spraying.

## Rain Increases Dangers

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 12 Sep 79 p 3

[Text]

Rain in central and northern NSW has not been enough to break the drought, but looks like increasing the risk of a locust plague.

The Weather Bureau in Sydney said there had been widespread useful falls in almost all parts of the State in the past two days.

But it is too early to say that it will prevent crop losses for wheat growers, or that the long dry spell has finally been broken.

The heaviest falls were concentrated in a belt running from Bourke to Parkes, then to Sydney and Newcastle.

In the 30 hours to 3 pm yesterday the heaviest reported fall was 78 mm at Mudgee.

Dubbo registered 62 mm in the same period.

Only 16.4 mm was recorded to 3 pm at Sydney Observatory.

A spokesman for the Weather Bureau said parts of the State had missed out on significant rain. There had been dry patches in the north-west border areas, the South Coast, North Coast and Northern Tablelands.

The rain had preceded a complex low-pressure system and cold front moving slowly eastwards. The cool change was expected in Sydney today, with

the rain contracting to the coastal and north-eastern parts of the State.

Mr Terry McHugh, a spokesman for the Department of Agriculture in Dubbo, said the rain would trigger a faster rate of hatching in the eggs recently laid by locusts.

"The situation with locust hatchings has been fairly quiet recently, but this rain is not good news," he said yesterday.

"Land holders must not relax their efforts to find the egg beds and report them to the pastures protection boards, because a few hot days after this rain will really get the locusts hopping."

Mr McHugh said it was expected that locust hatchings would reach their peak from the Queensland border and southwards in the next two to three weeks.

During question time in the Legislative Assembly yesterday the Minister for Agriculture, Mr Day, said rainfall in a large area of the State over the last two days had curtailed the control activity of plague locusts but not the locusts themselves.

He was answering a question from Mr H. D. Muir (Lab, Albury).

Mr Day said the largest number of sightings of locusts received by the department so far had come from the Warialda district.

RESEARCH PROJECTS TO CONTROL PESTS, ELIMINATE PESTICIDES

Peshawar KHYBER MAIL in English 7 Oct 79 p 4

[Text] The Pakistan Central Cotton Committee has undertaken a number of research projects aimed at eliminating use of pesticides.

According to a PCCC spokesman, the pest management programme includes field surveys to determine whether any insects are making inroads into standing cotton crops, and the initiation of remedial measures if needed.

He said the programme was also decided to do away with the indiscriminate use of pesticides, since unnecessary spraying either from the air or ground damaged the cotton crop is a useless attempt to kill insects which may not be present in the first place.

In the past, blanket spraying both from the air and the ground had at times caused more harm than good since in some of the areas where such operations were carried out were free from pests or the harmful insects were not present in appreciable numbers, he added.

He said in order to reduce the reliance on toxic chemicals (which always cause some damage to the standing crop.) The OPEC was introducing into the cotton fields parasites and predators which prey on the pests themselves.

He said this method had already been adopted in many countries and has now been introduced on a fairly large scale in Punjab.

This technique has also been initiated in Sind Province, he added.

However, he said the key feature of the pest management programme was the "scouting and forecasting system," whereby accurate field tests were made to check for the presence of harmful insects in standing cotton crops.

He also said that Mr Oscar Beingolea, a Food and Agriculture Organization expert currently attached to the PCCC research institute at Multan, had just completed a tour of Sind Province in which he surveyed the pest situation in the standing cotton crop.

Mr Beingolea will suggest ameliorative measures to be adopted for the control of pests and assist the provincial agriculture department in streamlining the "pest scouting and forecast system" and pave the way for introducing a way for "integrated pest management," the spokesman added.

He said the FAO expert had emphasized the importance rational pest control measures, based on information gathered about the agro-coligical system which result in low costs, higher production, reduced use of pesticides and destruction of cotton sticks along with the infested bolls.

CSO: 5400

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